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UNDP Administrator offers five-point plan for a new, improved UN development system

"We must move to a UN development system that is a real partner to the developing countries," United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator William H. Draper III told the 39th session of the UNDP Governing Council on 8 May in Geneva. He called for reforms to create "a system that can provide the best the world has to offer, in terms of information, of expertise, of policy options, and of scenarios for the future. A system which responds to the goals and aspirations of people and which best uses the scarce resources available for development."

Mr. Draper presented five new ideas for a productive and effective UN development system:

- At the field level, there should be a single UN country office — with one UN flag — under the authority of a single Resident Coordinator and including UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and UNDCP.
- This new and empowered field structure should mean maximum decentralization of authority to the unified field office, tightly coordinated management of policies and operations, efficient headquarters support and servicing of the unified field office, and clear-cut mandates to avoid duplication.
- All UN development activities should be governed by a single high-level committee or council which should receive reports from the separate executive boards of each programme or fund.
- The best people should be attracted through consistent personnel policies and more use should be made of national professionals.
- Predictable and multi-year resource flows should be established, combining assessed, negotiated and voluntary contributions. More assistance should be channelled through the UN.

"Increasingly, there is a vision of the United Nations as an instrument not only for peace, but also for a new form of global security; a vision which embraces dignity, human rights and the economic and social advancement of all people, throughout the world," said Mr. Draper.

He urged the Council not to change UNDP's focus from any other region of the world, or divert resources from poorer developing countries in considering support for countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States. But he insisted that the young and inexperienced countries of the former Soviet Union be offered their legitimate rights to benefit from UNDP's capacity building efforts in the same way that developing countries have since UNDP's founding. He added that UNDP will continue its focus on environment and the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Mr. Draper thanked all donors for their continued commitment and support to UNDP. He praised Sweden, which by increasing its contribution by 11 per cent this year has become the single largest donor to UNDP, and Norway for remaining the largest per capita contributor.

Moves made toward Minsk office

A host agreement between the United Nations and the Government of the Republic of Belarus, establishing an interim UN office in Minsk, was signed on 30 April. United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali entrusted the UNDP Administrator and the Under Secretary-General for Public Information to open Interim UN offices in six countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The high-level gathering in Minsk was the first joint UN mission to open one of these offices. Other offices are proposed for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Foreign Minister Pyotr Kravchenko extended special gratitude to the United Nations Secretary-General for his initiative and dynamic pioneering work in deciding to open such an office during this period of historic change. He also expressed appreciation to UNDP Administrator William H. Draper III.

Those attending the ceremony at the Council of Ministers included Mr. Sergei Ling, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Belarus; Mr. Samir Sanbar, Director of the UN Information Centres Division of the Department of Public Information; and Mr. Reinhard Helmke, UNDP Director of the Division of Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Mr. Ling expressed appreciation for the initiative taken by the UN and the team work of the UN Secretariat and UNDP. He announced readiness to extend any necessary support.

Bold new UN steps to aid the electoral process

To respond more quickly to increasing governmental demands for electoral assistance, UNDP's Global and Interregional Programme and the new Electoral Assistance Unit of the UN will be launching

several initiatives to foster free and fair elections. One project consists of a series of workshops on electoral administration in Africa and Asia.

These meetings will bring together electoral institutions in selected countries from the two regions to exchange experiences and collect information. Another workshop will bring together electoral institutions and aid agencies from developed countries to discuss aid coordination and technical assistance to electoral institutions. This is tentatively scheduled to take place in Ottawa, Canada, from 5-8 October.

Another new UN initiative in the electoral arena involves the creation of a Trust Fund for Electoral Assistance to be administered by UNDP. Still in the planning stages, this Fund will provide technical and material support for elections in countries which have no previous experience in organizing multi-party elections.

UNDP is also in the process of preparing guidelines for its Resident Representatives to help them respond quickly and efficiently to government requests for electoral help.

First 100 UN Volunteers dispatched to Cambodia

The first 100 of the expected 400 United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) are on their way to Cambodia to provide advance assistance for the national elections scheduled for Spring 1993. The UNV electoral specialists will support the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).

Each volunteer has extensive experience in such areas as civic education training, electoral work, computers, and statistical survey methods. In addition, the Director of the United Nations Medical Service has requested 17 UNV medical doctors to be dispatched to Cambodia.

The UNVs come from both developed and developing countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Egypt, France, India, Japan, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Sri Lanka and the United States.

Experts to formulate Afghanistan rehabilitation strategy

An inter-agency team, led and funded by UNDP, will be dispatched to Kabul in early June to mount the initial phase of a rehabilitation strategy for the country, contingent upon a continued cease-fire. In consultation with the new Interim Government, the group of development experts will draw up a broad framework for a technically sound reconstruction plan. This will lead to the identification of sustainable projects for funding by the UN and other donors.

The rehabilitation strategy will focus on priority needs and will be linked to an overall UN strategy for repatriation of Afghan refugees. Consisting of sectoral specialists in economic management, agriculture, infrastructure, education, and health, the initial team will come from UNDP, FAO, the IMF, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF.

India plans human development initiative

As a result of UNDP's *Human Development Reports*, the Government of India and UNDP are working closely to formulate a project to place human development issues at the centre of the country's economic development. A Human Development Profile will be designed to help policy-makers identify the most deprived segments of India's population, and determine the reasons for that deprivation. This Profile will help highlight the impact of adjustment policies on the poor and other vulnerable groups.

Data will be collected on relevant socio-economic characteristics in villages and towns in selected districts throughout the country. This information will then become part of a regularly updated data-base for continued monitoring of critical social indicators in the sample villages.

Designs will then be made for a large-scale national survey of rural and urban households to monitor human development. India's National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) will process the survey data and plan for future surveys. UNDP is expected to jointly sponsor the $940,000 project with other donors.

New Director chosen for UNDP Africa Bureau

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has been appointed Assistant Administrator of UNDP and Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa. She will lead UNDP activities to assist governments in Africa, the region with 32 of the world's 47 Least Developed Countries. She will also plan for and promote the social and economic well-being of Africans. Ms. Johnson Sirleaf is the first woman to head a UNDP Regional Bureau.

Until this appointment, she served as Vice President and Member of the Board of Directors, Equator Holders, Equator Bank Limited in Washington, D.C. Ms. Johnson Sirleaf brings to UNDP many years of experience, in both the public and private sector. From 1964 to 1969 she served as Assistant Minister of Finance and from 1977 to 1980 as Deputy Minister of Finance in her native country, Liberia. From 1973 to 1977 and 1980 to 1981, Ms. Johnson Sirleaf worked as

a Senior Loan Officer at the World Bank, Washington, D.C. In 1980, she was the President of the Liberian Bank for Development and Investment. From 1981 to 1985, she served as Vice President, Citibank, Regional Office for Africa in Nairobi, Kenya. She holds an M.P.A. Degree from Harvard University.

Fighting drug cultivation and trafficking in Vietnam

UNDP's Office for Project Services (OPS) will be helping the Government of Vietnam in its push to eliminate illegal cultivation of opium, reduce the demand for narcotic and psychotropic substances, and suppress the illicit trafficking of drugs. The government estimates that more than 2,000 hectares of land are under opium cultivation this year in 15 northern provinces. These estimates are considered conservative.

OPS is already involved in drug control in Laos, Myanmar and Thailand. In Vietnam, OPS will be contracting international consultants in anthropology, agro-forestry, health care, law enforcement and narcotics legislation, who will assist in preparing a comprehensive, drug abuse control master plan for the country.

This master plan will allow the government to review its legislation and current policies on treatment, rehabilitation and prevention of drug abuse.

The United Nations International Drug Control Programme will be funding the project and providing logistical support to OPS. Vietnam's Office of Mountainous Areas and Ethnic Minorities will be the government implementing agency.

UNDP introduces global environmental management training

UNDP has launched a project to lay the foundation for national-level training programmes in the use of UNDP's new Handbook and Guidelines for Environmental Management and Sustainable Development. These guidelines were designed to help development experts bring environmental concerns to the forefront of their work.

The book identifies environmental issues of global, national and local interest, and examines the social implications of promoting environmentally-sound economic programmes. It also assists users in targeting environmental opportunities and constraints when pursuing economic and social development objectives.

The Office for Project Services (OPS) of UNDP will organize workshops, prepare manual and audio-visual training aides, and develop an environmental management training programme based on the guidelines. These tasks will be achieved with the help of a lead trainer, a training logistics specialist, a special technical expert and 11 regional environmental experts, who will be recruited by OPS.

The initial three-day pilot courses will be attended by 20-30 development practitioners including government officials, NGO representatives, UN agency personnel and local experts. UNDP will finance the first three pilot workshops.

Approved projects

(all projects subject to modification; sums quoted in US dollars)

China — China is the world's largest coal producer and also the largest emitter of coalbed methane, a potent greenhouse gas. UNDP will provide technical and institutional support to China's national programme to reduce coalbed methane emissions. It will help introduce technologies and techniques for recovering and using methane.

The immediate objectives include developing a comprehensive methane recovery programme for Songzao mine in Sichuan province and introducing drilling technologies at Kailuan mine to mitigate methane emissions. UNDP will also help assess the potential for methane development in China, and strengthen the capacity of managers and engineers to evaluate and recover methane.

UNDP contribution: US$10,000,000. Funds will provide international consultants, study tours, equipment and vehicles. Executed by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Development and implemented by the Ministry of Energy. (CPR/92/G32)

Guyana — An evaluation of a joint UNDP and Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) programme to support the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) concluded that the institute had established a sound foundation for agricultural research, but weaknesses remained. The report showed that further assistance should focus on technology transfer to farmers, research into horticultural crops, and training.

UNDP will provide follow-up support to upgrade research and development programmes at NARI. Its assistance will help support the development of more high yielding varieties of rice and root crops and pest-resistant fruit trees. It will develop and implement pest management systems. In addition, procedures for transferring information to farmers, extension workers, exporters and consumers will be restructured.

Global Environment Facility (GEF) funding: US$1,534,104. Funds will support specialists in rice breeding, pest management and

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agricultural research. UNV specialists in weed control, plant pathology and horticulture will also be provided. Executed by FAO and implemented by NARI. (GUY/91/011)

Interregional Project

INT/92/017 — UNDP will launch a new facility to support small-scale projects by NGOs, community groups and municipal authorities to improve the urban environment. The Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE) will promote "local-local" dialogue and assist organizations in tackling critical urban environmental issues including water supply and sanitation, solid and liquid waste, and air and water pollution. Projects geared toward environmental health and education, development of environmentally-sound technologies and environmental planning will also be eligible for support from LIFE.

The Facility will provide funding for demonstration projects, institutional strengthening, documentation and interchange of information, and the transfer and replication of successful environmental improvement activities.

UNDP contribution: US$2,000,000. Proposed contribution from various bi-lateral donors: US$2,000,000. Funds will provide personnel to promote grassroots initiatives, subcontracts with national training and research institutions and NGOs, training, and dissemination of information. Executed by the Office of Project Services of UNDP, with assistance from the Programme Development and Support Division of UNDP.

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